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UNCLAS ABU DHABI 03437

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ACTION: POL  
INFO: PAO RSO AMB DCM MEPI P/M ECON

DISSEMINATION: POL  
CHARGE: PROG

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CLEARED: A/DCM:OJOHN, CG:JDAVIS

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1027  
INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHAE/AMEMBASSY ASMARA 0064  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0248  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1427  
RUEHKH/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0029  
RUEHNK/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT 0048  
RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 5302

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ABU DHABI 003437

SIPDIS

STATE FOR G, G/TIP, INL, DRL, NEA/RA, AND NEA/ARPI  
STATE ALSO PASS TO USTR

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [ETRD](#) [PHUM](#) [KJAN](#) [TC](#)  
SUBJECT: REPORT OF MORE TIP PROSECUTIONS, CAMEL JOCKEY  
REPATRIATIONS

REF: A. STATE 99833

[1](#)B. ABU DHABI 3297  
[1](#)C. ABU DHABI 3194

[1](#)1. Summary: UAEG progress on addressing the human trafficking problem has continued right through the August 2 60-day TIP action plan assessment period deadline (ref A). At the request of the Consul General, the Dubai Justice Department provided information on three new sex trafficking prosecutions, bringing to 22 the total number of nationwide investigations and prosecutions of human trafficking reported to us since the action plan was delivered to the UAEG on June [1](#)2. On the underage camel jockey front, both Ministry of Interior and UNICEF officials have told us of the imminent repatriation of 290 children rescued from camel jockey farms (approximately 150 Bangladeshis and 140 Pakistanis). The Bangladeshis will go home in tranches because their government can only accommodate 50 of them at one time, while the Pakistanis must wait until Pakistan International Airlines finds seats for them on a flight. The nationwide number of underage camel jockeys identified by authorities has reached 690, 77 of them from Dubai. The plight of domestic workers and laborers continues to receive almost daily attention in the local press, as do government actions to protect workers from employers who do not live up to their responsibilities.

[1](#)2. Summary continued: The following is a review of progress

made since our July 27 update on the mini-action plan (ref B), keyed to the six points in the action plan. It is based on information provided to us by the UAEG and the local press. Although the 60-day action plan assessment period is behind us, we will continue to press the UAEG to sustain its anti-TIP efforts in the months ahead. End Summary.

### 13. Begin progress report:

#### NATIONAL COORDINATOR -----

Action Plan Recommendation: Appoint a national coordinator with sufficient authority to oversee the implementation of this mini-action plan.

UAEG Response: Completed (see ref C).

#### IDENTIFICATION AND PROTECTION FOR CAMEL JOCKEYS -----

Action Plan Recommendation: Identify and provide protection, within the U.A.E., for at least 700 foreign child camel jockeys that are trapped in exploitation and begin providing them with appropriate rehabilitation, repatriation, and reintegration services. The number of victims identified and protected at government-provided shelters or elsewhere will be verified by the International Organization for Migration or UNICEF.

UAEG Response:

NEW DEVELOPMENT: UAEG WILL SOON REPATRIATE APPROXIMATELY 290 BOYS FROM PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH (SEE BELOW), WHICH WILL BRING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REPATRIATIONS TO 459 SINCE JUNE 2. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF UNDERAGE CAMEL JOCKEYS IDENTIFIED BY THE UAEG HAS INCREASED TO 690.

(Note: On May 8, 2005, the UAE Ministry of Interior and UNICEF signed a project agreement for identifying, rescuing, rehabilitating and reintegrating up to 3,000 children estimated to be in the UAE working in the camel jockey industry. Since June 2, the UAE has established three shelters in Abu Dhabi for housing and rehabilitating children rescued from camel farms. While at the shelters, the children receive health, psychological, and social care in order to prepare them for repatriation, according to information provided by the UAEG.)

-- According to UAEG statistics through August 8, 690 boys have been identified in the camel jockey industry, including 77 from Dubai Emirate. Repatriation formalities of 318 cases have been finalized under UNICEF supervision and in conjunction with source country embassies. (Note: The UAEG says that 169 children have been repatriated already, and that this was done "after ensuring that the children have received their compensation due from the date of their arrival in UAE up to the date of their departure." End note). A breakdown by nationality of those in the repatriation pipeline shows that the majority are from Pakistan, and the remainder from Bangladesh, Sudan, Mauritania, and Eritrea. In addition, as of August 8, there were 372 boys in the three shelters. The nationality breakdown for those boys is as follows: 173 from Pakistan, 133 from Bangladesh, 57 from Sudan, 5 from Mauritania, and 4 from Eritrea.

-- The UAE is prepared to repatriate approximately 150 Bangladeshis. A three-person team from Bangladesh (two government officials and one representative from the Women's Lawyers Association) is in the UAE this week to complete formalities for repatriating the boys. Ministry of Interior Social Support Center officials told us that 100 Bangladeshi children may have to remain in the UAE a little longer because the Bangladeshi government can only accommodate 50 children one time. This could temporarily affect the pace of rescue and rehabilitation of additional Bangladeshi children in the UAE because the three rehabilitation centers, or

shelters, are at capacity, Ministry of Interior officials told Pol Chief.

-- The UAE is also prepared to repatriate 140 Pakistanis. UNICEF and Ministry of Interior officials said that these children would have been returned to Pakistan sooner, but Pakistan International Airlines has not been able to accommodate this many children on one of its flights. A Ministry of Interior Social Support Center contact told Pol Chief that some children may be booked on other airlines to get around the problem.

#### INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION

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Action Plan Recommendation: Investigate and begin prosecuting at least 10 persons responsible for the trafficking, abuse, and exploitation of trafficked children in the camel racing industry. Investigate and commence prosecution of at least 5 cases involving the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. Investigate and commence prosecuting at least 5 cases of abuse of foreign domestic workers and laborers. Persons convicted should receive sufficient penalties reflecting the heinous nature of trafficking crimes. All investigations and prosecutions should be conducted with due regard to individual human rights.

#### UAEG Response:

NEW DEVELOPMENT: DUBAI EMIRATE REPORTED TO US INFORMATION ON THREE PROSECUTIONS FOR SEX TRAFFICKING (SEE BELOW), BRINGING THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REPORTED PROSECUTIONS FOR TRAFFICKING-RELATED OFFENSES NATIONWIDE TO 22, INCLUDING 12 FOR SEX TRAFFICKING, 5 FOR CAMEL JOCKEY TRAFFICKING, AND 5 FOR ABUSES AGAINST DOMESTIC WORKERS.

(Note: On July 5, President Khalifa issued a federal law that prohibits persons below age 18 from either sex from participating in camel races, and subjects traffickers to jail sentences not exceeding three years, and/or fines of not less than 50,000 Dirhams, or \$13,500. In the case of repeat offenders, the penalties will be doubled. The law took effect upon signature.)

-- The UAEG has provided us with evidence of 3 prosecutions (7 defendants) of sex trafficking in Dubai court. A chart provides case numbers, names of the accused, type of accusation, and sentence. The traffickers were of Bangladeshi (2), Indian (2), Azerbaijani (2), and Russian (1) nationality. The accusations include operating a brothel, encouraging prostitution, rape, assault, and illegal residency. The cases resulted in jail sentences ranging from two to five years, deportation, and the closure of three brothels.

-- The UAEG has already provided us with evidence of 5 cases of trafficking of underage camel jockeys, 9 cases of sex trafficking, and 5 cases of abuses against domestic workers (ref B).

#### MECHANISM FOR IDENTIFICATION AND PROTECTION OF VICTIMS

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Action Plan Recommendation: Develop and implement a formal mechanism for the systematic identification and protection of trafficking victims, including women in sexual servitude and women and men trafficked as domestic workers and laborers. Expand the availability of hotlines for foreign workers to report instances of abuse and to seek assistance.

UAEG Response: Completed (ref B).

#### ESTABLISHING SHELTERS; FORMAL PROTECTION

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Action Plan Recommendation: Establish shelters in Abu Dhabi and Dubai for trafficking victims, particularly for abused domestic workers, women forced into sexual servitude, and

male laborers, where such victims can receive protection, including counseling, medical, physiological, and other appropriate rehabilitation assistance regardless of their immigration status. Articulate how the U.A.E. government will extend formal protection to domestic workers and other laborers, currently without any protection outside of their employment contracts.

UAEG Response: Being addressed (ref B).

#### PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

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Action Plan Recommendation: Conduct broad public awareness campaigns highlighting the rights and obligations of domestic workers and laborers, and the consequence of abusing such workers.

UAEG Response:

There continues to be a steady stream of newspaper articles in the major daily papers intended to raise public awareness about working conditions and workers' rights, and the government's role in address labor issues:

-- "Al Khaleej" July 29: The Ministry of Labor in Dubai blacklisted 110 companies in Dubai for not paying wages to their employees.

-- "Khaleej Times" July 29: Minister of Labor Al Kaabi called a Sharjah-based labor recruitment company's practice of making 3,000 workers accept gold instead of cash wages "a serious offense" and a violation of the labor law.

-- "Khaleej Times" July 31: The Ministry of Labor has proposed establishing an independent Authority for Labor Security that would ensure companies comply with labor rules and accounting practices.

-- "Gulf News" Aug. 1: The Ministry of Labor will soon begin imposing fines on companies that violate the four-hour midday break rule for outdoor workers. Thus far, violators have had their transactions with the Labor Ministry temporarily suspended. Violators could face jail sentences of up to six months and/or fines of up to \$2,700.

-- "Gulf News" Aug. 1: The Interior Ministry announced the arrests of more than 2,500 infiltrators since April 2005.

End progress report.

#### COMMENT:

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14. The UAEG has provided additional evidence that it is investigating and prosecuting cases involving human trafficking. The authorities apparently have more information at their disposal about cases, but they had understood that they only needed to provide the suggested number of cases that were requested in the action plan. The camel jockey problem is being resolved, but apparently no one anticipated the logistical issues that would arise during the repatriation process. The unfortunate result is that UAE law enforcement personnel may have actually eased up on their raids of camel jockey farms because the rehabilitation centers are at capacity.

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